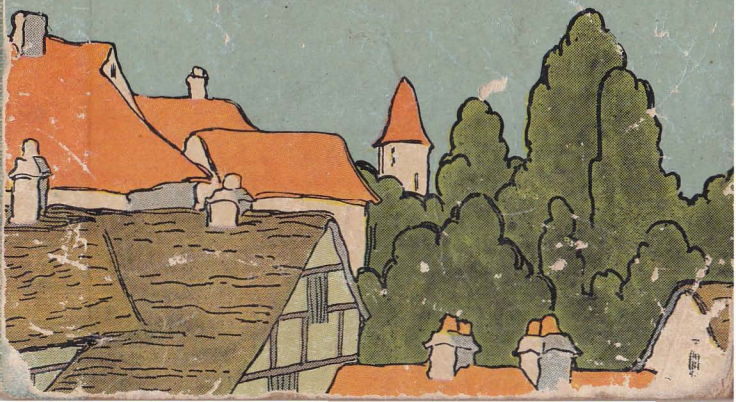
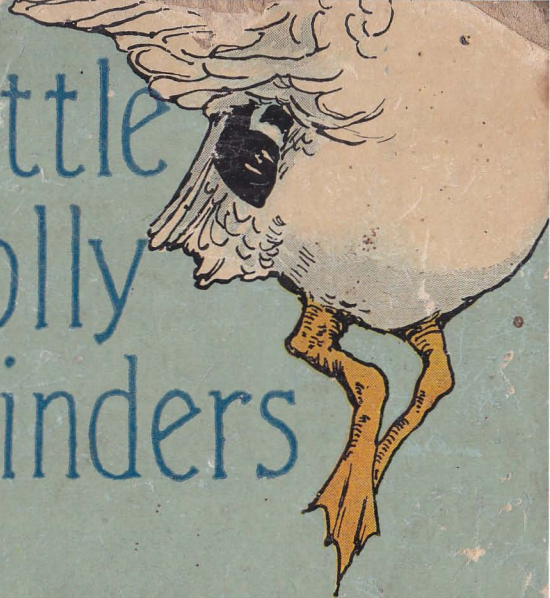


Little Polly Flinders



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Polly Flinders



The table was a large low flat rock.

Little Polly Flinders

By
Carolyn Wells



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LITTLE POLLY FLINDERS

Little Polly Flinders,
Sitting in the cinders,
Warming her pretty little toes;
Her mother came and caught her,
And scolded her little daughter,
For spoiling her nice new clothes.

Now, then, Kiddy-Cuddle, if
you want to hear some reading
aloud, here goes for the story of
Little Polly Flinders.

You see it was this way; Polly

was invited to a party, and the day of the party arrived. Of course, her mother gave her a bath, and scrubbed her clean, and dressed her all up in beautiful new clothes; and curled her hair and tied it up with a *big* pink ribbon bow. But she didn't *tie* the big pink ribbon, she tied with a little ribbon that didn't show, and pinned the big bow on with a hairpin.

The big bow was new, and her dress was new, and her shoes and stockings were new, and when she was all finished, Little Polly Flinders did look *lovely*! Her dress

was white, with ruffles on it and lace on the edge of the ruffles; and her little white petticoat had lace on it; and her stockings were white, and her shoes were little black patent leather slippers, because they happened to be in style that year.

Well, you see, Toodlums, Polly was *so* anxious to get dressed and see how she looked, and her mother was so *crazy* to get her dressed, to see how she looked, that she was all ready for the party half an hour too soon! For about ten minutes her mother fussed over her, perk-

ing up her hair ribbon, and straightening her dress, and making sure her little gold pins were fastened right,—but at last there wasn't a *single thing* left to fuss over, so her mother sat her down in the middle of a sofa, and told her not to budge till party time. Her mother had to go away then, because the telephone rang, and so Little Polly sat there alone, *very still*, without budging.

But after awhile she *had* to budge one foot a little bit, because it grew stiff; and then she *had* to budge the other foot a little bit,

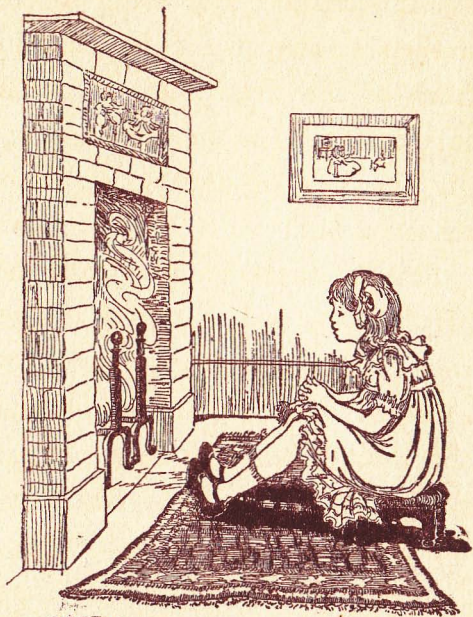
because that grew stiff, too. And then she just *had* to budge her arms a little bit, and then she budged her head, but *very* carefully so as not to unperk the pink ribbon.

But it seemed as if the time never would go, and mother didn't come back, and somehow Little Polly Flinders budged more and more, until she budged right off of the sofa! It felt so good to stretch her legs and arms, that she budged clear across the room! That brought her right in front of the fireplace, where there was a

fire burning. Polly wasn't cold, but it seemed a nice thing to do, so she sat down on a little bench in front of the fire. She sat down very carefully, so she didn't crumple her dress or unperk her hair-ribbon a bit.

She sat there looking into the bright fire, and her cheeks got rosy red; and perhaps it was because her cheeks were so hot, that she thought her toes felt cold, so she poked out her pretty little feet toward the cinders to warm them.

Well, Kiddy-Wid, you know what patent leather is. If you



A. M. Peck

She poked out her pretty little feet toward the cinders to warm them.

put it too near the fire it cracks, and Polly Flinders' new little patent leather slippers began to crack all over their shiny little toes! It was so funny, the way the cracks began to crackle, that Polly kept looking at them, and she put her toes nearer the fire to make more crackles come.

Now this was very naughty, Toodlums, as you know yourself, and I don't believe *you* would do it, but Polly Flinders didn't think, and you know how quick you can get into mischief when you *don't think!*

Well, Little Polly Flinders leaned her head over so far to watch her shoes crackling, that her big pink hair-ribbon fell right off into the fire! Yes, of course, that was because it was pinned on with a hair-pin,—and only one hair-pin at that. If it had been tied around, it wouldn't have happened. But all the same, with her bow pinned on, Polly Flinders ought to have been *extra* careful.

When her hair-ribbon fell in the fire she jumped up to see if she could rescue it, but she couldn't, for it was all ablaze.

Little Polly Flinders knew enough not to lean over the flame and get burned, but she *did* stand so close that the fire scorched her pretty white dress until the whole front of it was brown!

Just at this instant, Mrs. Flinders came back into the room, and when she saw what had happened, she scolded her little daughter *very* hard.

"You naughty, bad, girl!" she said, "to let yourself get burned like that, after mother dressed you up *so* pretty!"

"Look at my shoe, mother,"

said Polly, sticking out her little toe, "see, it's all crackled!"

"Spoiled!" said her mother, "*entirely* spoiled! and those shoes cost three dollars and seventy-five cents! And your dress is spoiled, and I don't know *how* much that cost! And your pink hair-ribbon is all burned up, and it was brand-new, and the hair-pin is gone,—but we won't count that. Polly Flinders you're a *very* naughty little girl, and I don't know *what* to do with you. You can't go to the party, that's certain."

"I could wear my other white dress, mother."

"No, indeed! I wouldn't *let* you go to Mrs. Grant's with a last summer's dress on; she dresses *her* children beautifully. No, you'll have to stay at home and I'll telephone to her that you can't come. And I had you looking so nice, and now you've gone and spoiled all your nice new clothes!"

"I'm sorry, mother."

"Sorry! that doesn't bring back your lost hair-ribbon or make your shoes good again. You're a naughty bad little girl, and for a

punishment, you must wear those burnt clothes the rest of the day and stay at home from the party."

You see, Honey-Blossom, Mrs. Flinders was rather a cross lady; and of course she *did* feel disappointed not to send her little girl to the party, after she had dressed her up so new and clean. But she was the kind of lady who wouldn't let her daughter go anywhere unless she was dressed *exactly* right; and as Polly's other new white dress wasn't quite finished, and her next best one was in the wash, she knew it was no

use to tease her mother to let her go.

So she wandered out into the back yard to play by herself all the afternoon, and have what fun she could.

She walked around, feeling rather sad and lonesome, when suddenly she spied the back gate open. Now it was *very* seldom that the back gate was left open. It was a narrow gate in a high wall, and the high wall ran all around the back yard of the house where Polly lived. It wasn't in the country, you know, with a big

lawn and trees; it was in the city, and this back gate opened on a narrow alley. Polly had never seen it open before, for when the butcher went in and out, he *always* closed it after him and the latch was too high for Polly to reach.

So of course, seeing the gate open, it was only natural that Polly should go and peek out. She saw a long narrow alley which seemed to lead out to a street.

Now, as I told you, Kiddy-Wid, Little Polly Flinders wasn't really a naughty little girl, but sometimes she *didn't think*, and this



The briars caught in her dress and pulled
the lace off the ruffles.

was one of the times; so, without thinking, she ran away!

Now, of course, you know, Blessedest, that it's a *very* naughty thing to run away, and of course *you* wouldn't do it, but Little Polly Flinders did! She slipped through the gate, and she ran and ran and ran. She ran through the alley, and out into the wide street. Polly Flinders had often been on this street, when she was dressed up and walking out with her mother, but she had never been there alone before. She stood and looked about her for a minute,

and then instead of going the way that she always went with her mother, and which led to town, she turned and went the other way, which led out toward the country, and straight to a piece of woods. Polly loved the woods, there was so much to see in them. So she ran as fast as she could straight to the woods, and soon found herself in among the tall trees.

It was a big wood, really a forest, and the trees were big and the rocks were big, and there were no paths, but just underbrush and vines all in a tangle.

But Polly liked this much better than a straight walk on a pavement, and she clambered along in delight. She scratched her shoes and tore her stockings, the briars caught in her dress and pulled the lace off the ruffles, and even the *little* ribbon that tied her hair came off, and her curls fell all over her head, and you *never* saw such a looking child as she was! But she only laughed with glee, for Polly was one of those children who don't care a bit about being dressed up, and she didn't mind rags at all.

She went on and on, pushing her way through the underbrush, and stopping now and then to pick a little wild flower or to hear a bird sing, and pretty soon she came up against what looked like an enormous big pile of rocks, with moss and vines all over it. And that's just what it was, and Polly paused for a moment, undecided whether to go around this great thing or to climb over it. She concluded it would be more fun to climb over it. So she went scramblety-bamble up the side, hanging on to the vines that straggled over the rock.

But after she got part way up, the vine broke loose, and down she rolled and fell ker-thump on the ground! It was mossy and soft, so she wasn't hurt, but she had thumped her head a little, and she lay there for a moment rubbing it and thinking what to do next. While she was thinking, she heard a patter of feet behind her, and lifted her head to see,—what *do* you suppose?—a lot of bears!

Polly was not a bit frightened, for she could see at once they were kind, good-natured bears, and they were jumping around her with of-

fers of help, and the old mother bear was already beginning to help the little girl up.

"There, there," said the kind old bear, "did it hurt itself, so it did! but not much,—not much. Jumpy-uppy, little girlie, and come along with old Mother Bumble."

Then Polly felt herself picked up in the big soft furry arms of old Mother Bear and carried away, followed by the four little bears and old Father Bumble Bear.

Mother Bumble carried Polly

right into the big mound of rock, which proved to be a bears' den or cave, and which had a door around on the farther side. After the old bear had put a little arnica on Polly's bruised head, the little girl felt all right again, and looked around her with great interest. The cave was very nice inside, having several rooms, all of stone, of course, with openings to go from one to another. There was no furniture except a few flat stones and lots of nice woolly fur rugs.

The four little bears seemed de-

lighted with their visitor, and came hopping and jumping around her.

"What is your name?" they asked, all at once.

"Little Polly Flinders," she said, "what's yours?"

"We're the little Cub-Bumbles," they replied; "four little Cub-Bumbles," and they joined hands, and danced around Polly in a circle.

"But haven't you separate names?" she asked.

"Of course they have," said old Father Bumble, looking at his



Polly felt herself picked up in the big soft, furry arms of old Mother Bear.

children with great pride. He was sitting cross-legged on a flat stone near the fireplace, and leaning up against the wall. "That very chubby fat one, that looks like a ball of fur, is Furry Bumble, and a dear little girl she is. Her sister next to her, is Fairy Bumble, because she is not a bit fat, but is light and airy and dances around all the time. The other two are my sons," and Father Bumble showed great pride as he looked at his two handsome sons. "The red one," he said, "is Fiery Bumble, because he has such red

hair, and a temper to match. But he is *nothing* compared to his brother! *He* has such a terrific temper that we named him Fury Bumble. He flies into *awful* rages, and he gets mad at the *least* thing and tears around like fury!"

Fury looked a little sheepish at his father's words,—that is, if a bear can be said to look sheepish,—and Polly Flinders thought there must be a mistake, for Fury looked so soft and furry as if he never could get mad. But all of a sudden, he flew in a tantrum, and went tearing around the room, hit-

ting everybody he met. He was so little and his paws were so soft that he didn't hurt anybody, but he knocked over his little brother and sisters, and nearly knocked over Polly Flinders. Then he whacked up against his mother, but she only smiled and patted his head. Then he went for his big old father and pounded him with his two little fat furry fists.

"That's it, my boy!" said old Father Bumble, shaking his fat sides with laughter, "pound away! show the little girl how you act when you're in a fury!"

"I'm *not* a fury! I'm a *good* little Cub-Bumble! I *don't* get mad! I *don't* fly into a tantrum! I'm *not* a fury!"

"No, he isn't a fury, he's a good little bear!" cried Fiery, who always took his brother's part, and who was high-tempered himself, though not so much as Fury.

Then old Father Bumble said, "There, there, my children, that will do. Now we'll all be nice and pleasant."

And just see, Trot, what good little bears they were, for whenever Father Bumble said that, they

all became nice and pleasant right away!

Then old Mother Bumble came waddling over, and came and sat down by Polly Flinders. "How did you happen here, my dear child?" she said; "and why are your clothes so torn? And dearie me! your dress is scorched! Have you been to a fire?"

So Polly told her all about what had happened, and how she had run away and wandered into the wood. "And now, Mother Bumble," she said, "I'm going to live here and be your little girl."

“Oh, I don’t know about that,—
I don’t know about that,” said
old Father Bumble; “I don’t
know as we have room for her,
have we, mother?”

“Plenty of room, plenty of
room; and she can stay for a time,
if she likes; but it depends on how
she behaves whether I’ll let her
stay long or not. Will you be
very careful, Little Polly girl, not
to teach my babies any naughty
tricks? I don’t want them to
stand in front of a fire and scorch
themselves!”

“I’ll promise to be good,” said



"Now don't come too close," she said
to the Cubs.

Polly, earnestly, "and I won't teach your little Cub-Bumbles any naughty tricks, but I'll teach them their letters."

"Fine!" exclaimed old Father Bumble, "fine! There's not much education in our family, and I'd like to have those Cubs learn something. Why, Little Polly Flinders, if you'll teach my children their letters, you can stay here all summer."

"I'll teach them their letters, Father Bumble, but I'm not sure I want to stay all summer. So I'll try it for awhile, and see."

"All right, Polly, all right, Polly," said Mother Bumble, bustling about; "we'll adopt you as one of the family as long as you want to stay. You can have the little gray room for yours,—it's the nicest room in the house. See, here it is."

She took Polly into a little room, which was so pretty that the little girl exclaimed with delight. The walls and ceiling, were just natural rock, but they were formed in odd and pretty shapes, and almost covered with beautiful gray lichens. There was a good-sized

opening for a window, and this was attractively screened all over with lovely green vines with little yellow blossoms on them. In one corner was a great white polar bear-skin rug, that was to serve for a bed.

“We like our beds flat on the ground,” said Father Bumble, “but if you prefer it, I’ll put some pine branches under that bear skin, and make you the finest bed you ever slept on. That’s a historic skin; it belonged to one of my ancestors, who used to live up at the North Pole. It’s a fine skin,

and I'm proud to offer it to you for your bed."

"It's beautiful," said Polly, stroking the soft white fur, "and I *would* like some pine branches under it, if you please. This is a lovely room, doesn't it belong to any of the Cub-Bumbles?"

"No, they have their own rooms," said their mother; "this used to be my sister's room, but she married a grizzly, and went away to live with him. So this room has been vacant ever since, and I'm right down glad to have somebody in it. Now, you chil-

dren, all run out to play, and I'll get supper."

"Come on, Polly," said the four little Cub-Bumbles, and two on each side of her, they all ran out of the cave to play in the sunlight. It wasn't bright sunlight, but just such as could flicker down through the forest trees. And the woods had a lovely piney smell, and the pine needles on the ground were like a soft carpet, and in front of the cave door was a sort of clearing, which made just the *nicest* place to play!

The four little bears didn't

know any game except just to tumble down and roll over and get up again. They tried to turn somersaults, but they were so fat that they always fell over sideways. Except Fairy; she was a light little thing, and could turn a somersault quicker'n a wink.

So Polly said she would teach them "Ring-around-a-Rosy." At first they couldn't learn it, for Fury insisted on going one way and Fiery was determined to go the other; but Polly taught them that they must join paws in a ring, and all go around the same way,

and she would be Rosy, and sit in the middle. After they understood, the Cub-Bumbles just loved the game, and they went around and around and around, singing Ring-around-a-Rosy, until they neary got dizzy.

Then Polly said she would put one of the little Cubs in the middle, and she would join in the ring. At first, the little Cubs were afraid to do this, for they seemed to be very timid little creatures, and hard to teach. But at last Furry consented to be Rosy, so she sat in the middle, all curled up in a

little heap and looking like a ball of brown fur. Then Polly joined hands with the other three Cubs, and around they went again.

Of course after that, all the Cubs wanted to be Rosy; and of course Fiery and Fury had a regular fight as to which should be first. They pounded each other with their soft little fists, and they kicked each other with their soft little hind-paws, and they both rolled over, and tumbled around, and cuffed each other's ears, and acted *perfectly* awful!

"You shan't either of you be

Rosy, if you don't behave better than that!" cried Polly, as she tried to separate the two; "behave yourselves, Fiery and Fury!" she gave them each a little smack on the side of the head, and in a minute they were as good as pie.

"You can be Rosy first, Fury dear," said Fiery, smiling at his brother.

"No, *you* can be Rosy first, dear Fiery," said Fury, smiling too.

"I *won't* do it; *you* be it first."

"No, I *shan't!* you've *got* to be it first, yourself!"

"I won't, I won't! I *won't!* so, there now!"

"You *shall* too! if you don't, I won't play!"

"Neither will I!" and then Fiery hit Fury a clip, and Fury gave Fiery a whack, and away they tumbled, rolling over and over again.

"They always act like that," said Fairy; "don't pay any attention to them. They're not really fighting, it's just their way. They can't seem to help it. Let's play without them."

"No," said Polly, "they've got



Polly sat down on the ground and covered her eyes with her hands and counted fifty.

to behave themselves! Get up here, you two!" she pulled the scrambling bears apart and stood them up and shook her finger at them. "Now, because you've acted so bad," she said, "you can't either of you be Rosy! we're not going to play that game any more to-day, and we won't play it to-morrow, unless you behave better."

Fury and Fiery were awfully sorry then, that they had been so bad, and they promised to be good if Polly would let them play. But she said no, that they couldn't play until the next day, and she

stuck to it. So they all just had to sit around and talk, until Mother Bumble called them to supper.

Then they all trooped into the cave, and found a beautiful supper waiting for them in the Bumbles' pretty dining-room. The dining-room was very large and had three windows looking out toward the sunset. These windows were draped with green vines, which grew and hung in such a way that they could be pushed aside like curtains, to let in the sunset and the evening

breeze. The walls were of sparkly rock, that flashed in the sunset like little diamonds. The floor was strewn with soft brown pine needles and a pleasant fire glowed on the hearth.

The table was a large, low flat rock, and although the bears sat right down on the floor around it, a low stone had been placed for Polly, covered with a piece of nice soft bear-skin.

The supper was delicious. There was fresh fish that Father Bumble had caught in the brook, and there were different kinds of

fruits and nuts; and plenty of honey,—which bears just *love*. Polly loved it too, and as she had grown hungry playing around, she enjoyed her supper very much. The little bears had very good table manners, and as Fiery and Fury knew they would be sent away from the table if they quarreled, they were very peaceful.

After supper, the children sat round the fire, and Father Bumble told them stories, while Mother Bumble did up the dishes.

The very next morning, right after breakfast, Father Bumble

held Polly to her promise to teach the children their letters.

"I will," said Polly, "but I haven't any slate and pencil."

Old Father Bumble scratched his head and sat in deep thought. Then he said, "We'll have to use a sharp stick and write on the ground. Come on, I'll fix it."

So while Mother Bumble was doing up the breakfast things, the rest all went outdoors, and Father Bumble fixed a place. He swept all the pine needles away from a flat level piece of ground, and there it was, nice hard dirt. Then

he found a very sharp stick for a pencil, and told Polly to go ahead.

So Polly took the stick, and drew the letter A on the ground, saying, "That's A."

Father Bumble was deeply interested. He waddled up and looked at the A, then he walked all around it, and looked at it from the other side.

"That's upside down," said Polly.

"I want to learn it both ways," said Father Bumble, gravely; "I may as well confess I'm not an educated man; but I want to learn,

and what I learn, I want to know *thoroughly.*"

Of course this was the right spirit to show, and Polly was very glad that Father Bumble wanted to be in the class too.

As for the four Cub-Bumbles, they were simply crazy about that letter A! They rushed up to it, and got their little heads together over it, pawing and clawing at it in their eagerness, until it was all scratched away!

"Now this won't do," said Polly, "if you're going to learn your letters, you must behave like good

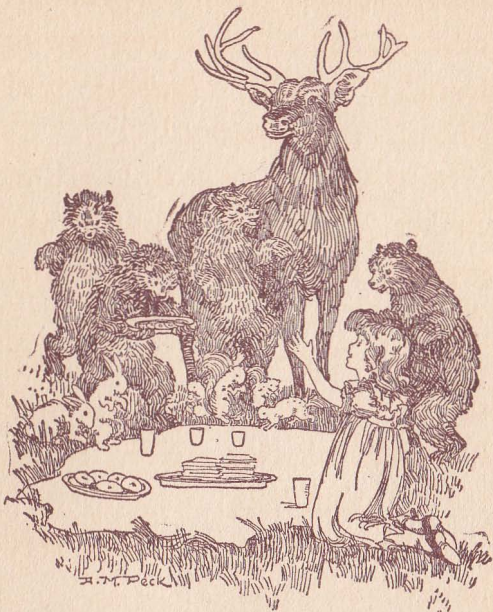
little scholars. Now I'll make another A, and I'll show you how to learn it. Father Bumble, you smooth off the ground."

So with a nice flat little board, Father Bumble smoothed the ground, and Polly made another A.

"Now don't come too close," she said to the Cubs. "Sit in a line and look at it. Now, Fairy, tell me what it is."

"Dirt," said Fairy, staring very hard at the letter A.

"I don't mean that! What *letter* is it?"



"Then it's a picnic," cried Polly, "and that's a great deal more fun than a tea party."

"Polly's letter," piped up Furry, smiling through her fur.

"No," said Polly, patiently, for she began to see the Cubs were not very quick-witted; "it's A! A, A, A! Now *say* it!"

"A," they all cried, in chorus, and Polly made them say it over and over until they knew it.

"Now," she said, "we'll rub this out and begin on B."

But such a howl as the bears set up! They wouldn't *let* her rub it out, it was *their* A! They had learned it, and they were going to *keep* it. In fact, Fiery and

Fury had a regular fight over it, for each declared it was *his* A, and as they happened to have their scuffle right *on* the letter A, as you may well imagine there wasn't any A left when they got through!

"Never mind," said Polly, "that's enough school for one day. Now you know A, let's all go and play, and to-morrow morning we'll learn another letter." So the four Cubs and Polly ran away to play, but old Father Bumble stayed there, trying to draw A's on the ground with his sharp stick. Polly set him a copy be-

fore she left, and the old bear succeeded in making some very good A's.

"What shall we play?" asked the Cubs as they ran away with Polly; "Ring-around-a-Rosy, again?"

"No," said Polly, "this time we'll play hide-and-seek."

"Hide - and - Seek!" repeated Fury, "What in the world is that? I never heard of such a thing."

"You don't seem to know much, do you?" said Polly, as she looked at the four little Cubs who stood around her, eager to learn about the new game.

"Well, we can't help it!" exclaimed Fiery, who was always quick to take offense. "No one ever taught us these things, like letters and games, so how *could* we know?"

"That's so," said Polly, laughing. "Now I'll show you how. I'll shut my eyes tight and count fifty, and you Cubs all go off and hide yourselves and then I'll try to find you."

"Where shall we hide?" asked Fairy, dancing around on her tip-toes.

"Why, I can't tell you *that*, be-

cause then, I should know just where to find you! But you hide behind something, or somewhere that I can't see you, and after I count fifty I'll come and hunt you up."

So Polly sat down on the ground and covered her eyes with her hands and counted fifty. The little Cubs were all in a flurry, for they hardly knew *where* to hide. But at last Furry said he should go and get into the hollow tree, because then he could see out, and see when Polly was coming.

Furry decided to hide in a bush,

so she just rolled into a low bush, and lay there like a ball of fur among the green leaves. Fiery hid by getting behind a rock; and Fairy was agile enough to climb up into the branches of a low tree.

When Polly had finished her fifty, she started to hunt the Cubs, and as they were all rustling and bustling with excitement and, nearly falling out of their hiding-places, of course she couldn't help seeing them. But she pretended not to see them at first, and walked right past Fury in the hollow tree;

although she saw his grinning face looking straight at her.

"Hi!" called Furry, as she passed; "why don't you find me? here I am!"

So Polly turned back and pulled the little fellow out of the hollow tree, and patted his head, saying, "That was a fine place to hide, you play the game very nicely."

Then she saw Furry's round back sticking up in the bush, and leaning over she picked up the little Cub in her arms, saying, "Aha, Furry, I've found you!"

"Find me next; find me next!"

called a voice above her head, and looking up Polly saw Fairy swinging from a low branch of a tree.

"Drop and I'll catch you," she said, "and then you'll be found."

So Fairy dropped, but she was a heavy little cub after all, and she upset Polly and they both rolled over on the ground. But they were not hurt, and both jumped up laughing, while Polly proceeded to look for the other bear.

"Hurry up and find me," Fiery called out, jumping up and down behind his rock, and Polly ran



The four Cubs and Polly started off for a walk round the woods to show off their new clothes.

around and found him, and then all the bears were found.

It wasn't just the way Polly usually played hide-and-seek, but they had lots of fun over it, and the Cubs all giggled and shook their little fat sides with laughter.

"Now *you* hide," said Furry, "and we'll all find you."

So all the bears sat in a row on the ground, and put their paws over their eyes, but they couldn't count fifty, because they didn't know how to count at all. So Polly told them just to cover up their eyes for a minute, and when

she called "Coop!" they could come and find her.

So Polly ran away and ran straight into the bears' house, for she felt sure that would be the last place they would think of looking. She called "Coop!" just before she ran around the corner of the house; and sure enough, when the Cubs started to look for her, they didn't go toward the house at all. In fact they looked first in the very places where they had hidden themselves. Furry looked in the hollow tree; Furry looked in the bush; Fairy looked

up in the low tree's branches, and Fiery ran around behind the rock to see if Polly could be there. As none of them found her, they came together again, and consulted what to do next. Polly, who was watching from the window, had to laugh as she saw their bewildered little faces, and heard them wondering where she *could* be!

"It's a shame to tease them," she thought to herself, so she called from the window, "Here I am! come and find me!"

The little bears fairly tumbled

over each other as they rushed toward the house; and they ran in and fairly tumbled all over Polly, they were so glad to find her.

"Now tell us some other nice game to play," cried Fury; "your games are lovely."

"Well," said Polly, "let's play tea party."

"What's that?" the Cubs demanded, for they had never heard of such a thing.

"Well," said Polly, "you have to have nice things to eat, and then you invite some company to eat them."

Mother Bumble who overheard this, said that she would provide the nice things to eat, and Polly and the Cubs could go and invite the company.

So they started off, all taking hold of hands, with Polly in the middle and two Cubs on either side of her.

They invited the Squirrel family, who were delighted to come, and who said they would come right along now. There were father and mother Squirrel and half a dozen little kiddy-squirrels, and they hopped along waving

their bushy tails, and chattering with pleasure. Then they asked a family of rabbits and two very handsome 'Possums and a stately old Deer.

The Deer was undecided at first about going to the party, but at last he said he would go, and the whole crowd went along together.

They decided they had enough for the party now, and went back to the bears' house where Mother Bumble had a fine feast ready for them.

As the dining-room was not

big enough she and Father Bumble had spread a table-cloth on the ground, and said they would have the feast out-doors.

"Then it's a picnic!" cried Polly, "and that's a great deal more fun than a tea party! But if it's a picnic we have to have lemonade."

At this Father and Mother Bumble looked very sad. "We can't have lemonade, I'm sorry to say," said Mother Bumble, "because we haven't a lemon in the house."

"We're very sorry," said Father

Bumble; "if we'd had the least idea that you wanted lemons we would have laid in a supply."

"Well," said Polly, "of course we can drink water,—but I never *heard* of a picnic without lemonade. It doesn't really seem like a picnic at all!"

And you know yourself Kiddywid, that you *never* went to a picnic where there wasn't any lemonade! And the little bears had never any lemonade in all their little lives, and of course they wanted it *very* much.

The Deer,—he was rather stuck

up,—said he thought he should go home, as he didn't care to drink plain water at a picnic. The other guests politely said it didn't matter at all, but you could see they were disappointed.

Well, just as they were all feeling downhearted about the matter, who should come walking along, but Amy Letty, carrying a basket of lemons and seven pounds of sugar!

Such shrieks of delight as rose from the whole company; and the Deer sat down again and said he would stay.

Father and Mother Bumble made quick work of squeezing the lemons, while the little Cubs brought the water from the brook, and then Amy Letty put the things together, and made the lemonade, and gave Polly a little bit on a spoon to see if it was sweet enough. And Polly said it was, so then everything was all right, and they had the loveliest picnic you ever saw! Amy Letty had to go home before it was over, but the other guests stayed quite late, and they finished up all the good things to eat that Mother Bumble had pro-



She heard footsteps and in a minute a great big lion came to the door.

vided, and then they all went home.

It was the next day after that, that the four little Cub-Bumbles took a notion that they wanted clothes like Polly's.

Now Mother Bumble was always glad to indulge her children, but she simply *couldn't* get clothes like Polly's for them. And she told them that, anyway, little bears didn't need clothes, for they had their nice fur coats on all the time.

But the Cubs insisted, and they carried on perfectly awful!

Fiery and Fury flew into tantrums, and Furry and Fairy just sat and sobbed with tears rolling down their fur cheeks.

But no matter how much they cried and carried on, there was nothing to be done, for there was *no* way to get the clothes. Polly offered to go to bed for a day, and let the Cubs wear her dress in turns, but this was not what they wanted. They said they wanted nice pretty clothes like little girls and boys wore.

Well, things were getting very unpleasant indeed, when along

came Amy Letty with her arms full of nice clean clothes!

Such rejoicing as there was among the bears! They could scarcely wait to get dressed in the things, and when they were finished off, they did look beautiful. Fairy's dress was white dimity, with little pink rosebuds on it; and she had a lovely wide pink sash and a wide straw hat trimmed with roses; and you never saw anything so cunning as her fat little bear face smiling out from under that hat brim.

Furry had a blue lawn with lit-

tle sprigs in it, and bows of black velvet on it. Instead of a hat, she had a frilled sunbonnet with lace on the frill, and tied with blue ribbons under her fat little chin.

The boy Cubs had rompers and straw hats. Fiery's rompers were blue and white striped, and Fury's rompers were red and white striped, and they both had pockets in them.

The four Cubs and Polly started off for a walk round the wood, to show off their new clothes to whomever they might meet.

As they walked along, they

passed many of the forest creatures, and everybody admired the new finery. Fairy and Furry flirted their little skirts, and danced along very proud and happy; while Fiery and Fury strutted along with their hands in their pockets.

They walked so far and followed such a winding route, that the first thing they knew they were lost, and couldn't find their way home!

"I thought you knew your way around," said Polly, "or I would have looked after it myself."

"We do know the way around," said Fiery, "only the ways seem to be all mixed up, and they don't go where they ought to. Suppose we try this way."

It was about the only way they *hadn't* tried, so they started off, hoping that this way would lead them home. But instead of that, the way led farther into the forest, and there seemed to be no by-paths or any other road to travel. So there was nothing to do but to keep on or go back.

"And we may as well keep on," Polly said, "for if we go back, we

know we're lost; and if we keep on, may-be we'll find ourselves."

So they kept on, and they soon found that the road led straight to a big den of rocks.

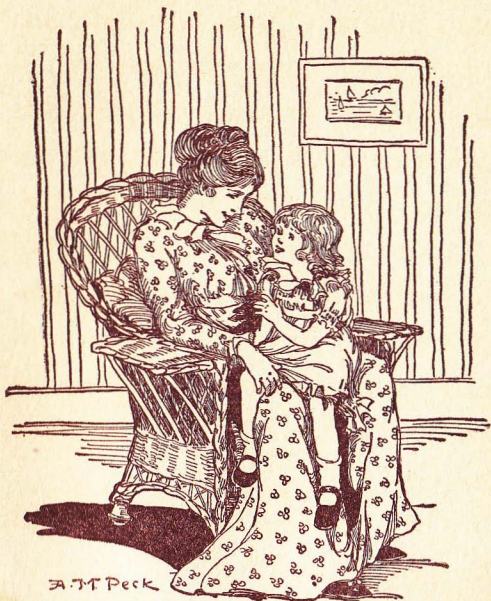
"Somebody must live here," said Fairy, "for see, flowers are growing around the door."

Sure enough, there was quite a pretty flower garden in front of the den and either side of the front door, showing that whoever lived there was not only fond of flowers but knew how to raise them.

Polly knocked on the door, and waited for someone to come and

answer. She heard footsteps, and in a minute a great big lion came to the door. He was the loveliest lion you *ever* saw, and his eyes twinkled with kindness, and he smiled pleasantly at his visitors. "Come in, come in, I'm *very* glad to see you. I have so little company, and I'm really of a very social nature. Come in, and make yourself at home. What are your names?"

They told him their names, and he went on chatting. "I'm called Smiley Lion," he said. "They call me that, because I can't help



And her mother kissed her and said she
was glad to have her little girl home again.

smiling. But you see I'm of a merry nature, and if I don't have anybody else to smile at, I smile at my flowers, and they smile back at me, and we have a beautiful time. Would you like some little cakes and honey?"

Smiley Lion bustled about, and set out little cakes and honey for his visitors, patting them on the head or shoulders as he did so.

"We're lost," said Polly, "and we want to find our way home."

"Oh, that's all right," said Smiley Lion, "I'll take you home after you eat your cakes. And I'll

give you each a nice bunch of flowers to take with you."

"You're very kind," said Polly, "I wish we could do something for you to show our gratitude."

"Well," said Smiley Lion, "there is *one* thing you could do. Can you sew?"

"A little, but not very well," Polly answered.

"Well, I'll tell you; somehow or other I've worn a hole in my handkerchief. I only have one handkerchief, I found it once in a forest; I suppose somebody dropped it. It's a *very* nice handkerchief,

but there's a little hole in it. Now if you could darn it for me—"

"Of course I can," said Polly; "I sew well enough for that. Have you a needle and thread?"

Smiley Lion produced a needle and thread, and Polly darned the hole in his handkerchief. It wasn't mended so *very* well, for she was only a *little* girl, but Smiley Lion thought it was beautiful, and he thanked her over and over again.

And then, all of a sudden, they heard a great commotion outdoors! They heard people shouting and

bells ringing and trumpets blowing and they couldn't imagine what was the matter.

"Don't be afraid, little ones," said Smiley Lion, "I'll protect you, whatever it is. You stay here, and I'll go and see what's the matter."

Smiley Lion went to his front door, and he saw several men ringing bells and shouting. And they were saying, "Where is Polly Flinders? We're hunting for Polly Flinders!"

"My, goodness gracious!" exclaimed Smiley Lion, "they're

hunting for you, Polly! The bell-ringers are out, trying to find you! I suppose you'll have to go. Isn't it *lucky* you finished mending my handkerchief!"

Then Polly went to the door, and the bell-ringers exclaimed, "There she is! There she is! Now we'll take her home to her mother. Come along, Little Polly Flinders!"

The men were very kind and gentle, and two of them made a chair of their hands for Polly to ride on; and though, of course, she was sorry to leave Smiley Lion and

the Bumble Bear family, yet she was glad to get back to her mother, and get a nice clean dress on, in place of the one she had scorched so badly before the fire.

And her mother kissed her, and said she was glad to have her little girl home again. And Little Polly Flinders said she was glad too.

